

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A Molding molding unit for an extrusion-blow molding machine for articles made of thermoplastic material, of the type in which the molding unit (10) comprises a mold in two parts (12, 14), each mold-half (12, 14) being borne by a movable support (16, 18), of the type in which the two movable supports (16, 18) are moved transversely, in opposite directions with respect to the frame that bears them, between an open position in which the two mold-halves (12, 14) are transversely separated from each other, to allow the insertion of a blank of the article in a cavity delimited between the two mold-halves, and a closed position in which the two mold-halves are pressed against each other and in which the supports (16, 18) are connected to each other by a screw means, of the type in which the molding unit (10) has a mechanism (22, 24, 26) of simultaneous movement of the two supports of the molds (16,18), and of the type in which the molding unit (10) has, between at least one of the mold-halves (12) and the associated support (16), compensating means (30) which push the mold-half (12) transversely toward the other mold-half (14),

characterized in that the mechanism (24) for moving the supports is linked to at least said associated support (16), by means of elastically deformable means (46) that are suitable for compensating for the deformation of the support (16) created by the forces exerted by the compensating means (30).

2. (Currently Amended) The Molding molding unit according to claim 1, characterized in that the ~~movement~~ mechanism for moving the supports acts on the plate (34), which is transversely slideably mounted on the support (32, 16), and in that the ~~spring-forming~~ elastically deformable means (46) are interposed transversally between the plate (34) and the support (32, 16).

3. (Currently Amended) The Molding molding unit according to ~~either of claims 1 or claim 2~~, characterized in that the plate (34) can pivot with respect to the support (16).

4. (Currently Amended) The Molding molding unit according to ~~either of claims 1 or claim 3~~, characterized in that the ~~spring-forming~~ elastically deformable means comprise blocks of elastomer material (46).

5. (Currently Amended) The Molding molding unit according to ~~any of the preceding claims~~ claim 4, characterized in that the mechanism for moving the ~~two~~ supports (16, 18) is comprised of a drive screw (22), which is furnished with two threaded sections (22a, 22b), the direction of turn of the threads of the two sections being opposite, and each threaded section cooperating with a nut (24, 26) linked to one of the supports, and in that the elastically deformable means (46) are interposed between the nut (24) and the support (16) to which it is linked.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~The Molding~~ molding unit according to claim 5, characterized in that the nuts (24, 26) are ball-race nuts.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~Molding~~ The molding unit according to ~~any of the preceding claims-claim 1~~, characterized in that it comprises compensating means (30) only between one (12) of the mold-halves and the associated support (16), and in that the elastically deformable means (46) are interposed only between said associated support and the mechanism for moving the supports (16, 18).

8. (Currently Amended) ~~Extrusion-blow~~ An extrusion-blow molding machine, characterized in that it comprises at least one molding unit according to ~~any of the preceding claims-claim 1~~.

9. (New) The molding unit according to claim 1, characterized in that:
the movement mechanism acts on the plate (34), which is transversely slideably mounted on the support (32, 16), and in that the elastically deformable means (46) are interposed transversally between the plate (34) and the support (32, 16); and
the elastically deformable means comprise blocks of elastomer material (46).

10. (New) The molding unit according to claim 1, characterized in that:

the mechanism for moving the supports acts on the plate (34), which is transversely slideably mounted on the support (32, 16), and in that the elastically deformable means (46) are interposed transversally between the plate (34) and the support (32, 16); and

the mechanism for moving the supports (16, 18) is comprised of a drive screw (22), which is furnished with two threaded sections (22a, 22b), the direction of turn of the threads of the two sections being opposite, and each threaded section cooperating with a nut (24, 26) linked to one of the supports, and in that the elastically deformable means (46) are interposed between the nut (24) and the support (16) to which it is linked.

11. (New) The molding unit according to claim 1, characterized in that:

the mechanism for moving the supports acts on the plate (34), which is transversely slideably mounted on the support (32, 16), and in that the elastically deformable means (46) are interposed transversally between the plate (34) and the support (32, 16);

the elastically deformable means comprise blocks of elastomer material (46); and

the mechanism for moving two supports (16, 18) is comprised of a drive screw (22), which is furnished with two threaded sections (22a, 22b), the direction of turn of the threads of the two sections being opposite, and each threaded section cooperating with a nut (24, 26) linked to one of the supports, and in that the elastically deformable means (46) are interposed between the nut (24) and the support (16) to which it is linked.

12. (New) The molding unit according to claim 1, characterized in that:

the mechanism for moving the supports acts on the plate (34), which is transversely slideably mounted on the support (32, 16), and in that the elastically deformable means (46) are interposed transversally between the plate (34) and the support (32, 16);

the plate (34) can pivot with respect to the support (16); and

the mechanism for moving two supports (16, 18) is comprised of a drive screw (22), which is furnished with two threaded sections (22a, 22b), the direction of turn of the threads of the two sections being opposite, and each threaded section cooperating with a nut (24, 26) linked to one of the supports, and in that the elastically deformable means (46) are interposed between the nut (24) and the support (16) to which it is linked.

13. (New) The molding unit according to claim 1, characterized in that the plate (34) can pivot with respect to the support (16).

14. (New) The molding unit according to claim 1, characterized in that:

the plate (34) can pivot with respect to the support (16); and

the elastically deformable means comprise blocks of elastomer material (46).

15. (New) The molding unit according to claim 1, characterized in that:

the plate (34) can pivot with respect to the support (16); and

the mechanism for moving the supports (16, 18) is comprised of a drive screw (22), which is furnished with two threaded sections (22a, 22b), the direction of turn of the threads of

the two sections being opposite, and each threaded section cooperating with a nut (24, 26) linked to one of the supports, and in that the elastically deformable means (46) are interposed between the nut (24) and the support (16) to which it is linked.

16. (New) The molding unit according to claim 1, characterized in that the mechanism for moving the supports (16, 18) is comprised of a drive screw (22), which is furnished with two threaded sections (22a, 22b), the direction of turn of the threads of the two sections being opposite, and each threaded section cooperating with a nut (24, 26) linked to one of the supports, and in that the elastically deformable means (46) are interposed between the nut (24) and the support (16) to which it is linked.

17. (New) The molding unit according to claim 10, characterized in that the nuts (24, 26) are ball-race nuts.

18. (New) The molding unit according to claim 11, characterized in that the nuts (24, 26) are ball-race nuts.

19. (New) The molding unit according to claim 12, characterized in that the nuts (24, 26) are ball-race nuts.

20. (New) The molding unit according to claim 15, characterized in that the nuts (24, 26) are ball-race nuts.

21. (New) The molding unit according to claim 16, characterized in that the nuts (24, 26) are ball-race nuts.